/14 cont./

853 she runs up against the difficulty of accustoming the child to this kind of food, which may cause its death; furthermore, a wet nurse is often out of the question, for unless she is a relative who will do it without charge, it is almost impossible for a poor woman to meet the cost. For this reason the arrival of twins in a poor family is a hard blow, but in these circumstances every Guajiro woman whose services as wet nurse are solicited will consent, as she believes that a refusal would involve her in a double delivery in the future.

Thus, recourse to a wet nurse is limited to mothers with economic resources, who obtain the services of one with a child of an age approximately the same as their own and bring her into the home. The wet nurse receives a payment which has been agreed upon beforehand, either in money, clothes, or animals, as well as her food, in which the mother takes special interest for the benefit of her own child, as also her clothes, which the mother also supplies. The wet-nurse's child is usually left with her relatives, who feed him by bottle on goat's milk, mazamorra, and other food which substitute for the mother's breast, and even if he stays with his mother, he is weaned in order to give a greater amount of breast milk to the other child. Sometimes he is given the breast, but the child of the house in which the mother serves is always given preference. His sustenance, in this case, is included in the payment agreed on.

Generally, the wet nurse engaged by a Guajiro wife is of lower social standing, and she gives her services in exchange for the personal advantages that accrue, since her situation in the house is good for the reasons mentioned, and her standing in the family collectivity is improved, because in a certain physical sense she is comparable with the mother, as on her depends the rearing and the health of the child. This establishes a link and a mutual relationship between them, and the wet nurse acquires a certain superiority as well as a physical bond with the child whom she nourishes. By this, if she is a slave, her position is eased and improved, and she gains in consideration and status. The same conditions apply if she is a bond servant.